

Introduction:

Bennettiales are an extinct kind of seed plant, they are represented by at least two species of Ptilophyllum, including *P. boolensis* and *P. fasciatum*. Bennettiales, an extinct lineage of Mesozoic seed plants with cycad-like foliage and flowerlike reproductive structures.



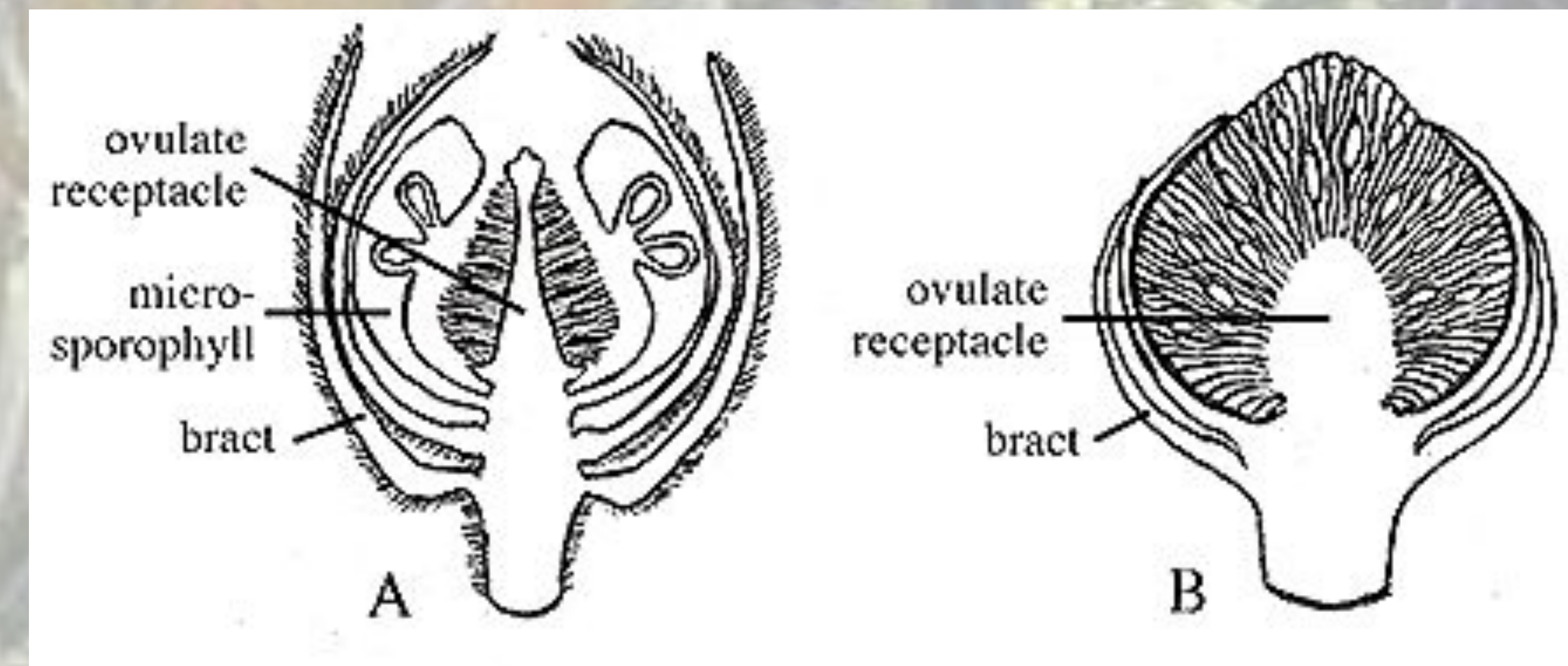
Bennettiales



Evolution/Taxonomy:

As of now, scientists are still studying the relationships between prehistoric plants and modern plants. The evolution of angiosperms is one mystery still yet to be solved. Some scientists believe that Bennettiales are an ancestor of the modern angiosperm.

Evidence for this is the Bennettiales reproductive structure, which contains both male and female organs, like angiosperms, and is surrounded in structures that resemble petals, and could be homologous with petals on modern flowering plants.



Habitat/Range:

Bennettiales were found mostly in stable environments like floodplains and swamps. It is known from Early Cretaceous fossilized forests in the Antarctic islands, India, and China.

Morphology:

Bennettiales are reconstructed as small, sparsely branched or unbranched trees or small shrubs. The trunk is slender or in some Bennettiales barrel-shaped. Leaves are large, simple or pinnately divided, very similar in gross morphology to some cycad leaves.

There are 2 groups within Bennettiales differing in unique traits they are Cycadeoidaceae (stout trunk and bisporangiate strobili, serving as reproductive system) and Williamsoniaceae (with either bisporangiate or monosporangiate and slender branching wood like trunks)

Geologic range (dates): 262-66 Mya during the age of cycads
This group of plants flourished in the triassic to lower cretaceous.

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GEOL204 The Fossil Record
Spring 2019 Section 0105